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ABSTRACT

This book presents a case study of the introduction of a new policy of 'racial matching' in foster care, the matching of foster child and family on the basis of culture and race, and reviews the policy's implications for the recruitment of black foster caregivers. The report describes how the issue arose on the social work agenda, and how it was approached within one London borough. Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the new policy of racial matching. Chapter 2 discusses methodological and ethical issues. Chapter 3 describes how the new ideas gained prominence in social work thinking. Chapter 4 presents an overview of developments London-wide as reported in a postal survey of principal fostering officers. Chapters 5 and 6 examine the evolution of policy with the borough fostering team, based on interviews with workers and an analysis of team meeting minutes. Chapter 7 describes the recruitment campaign that was the focus of the study. Chapter 8 examines changing ideas about applicants' suitability within a model of cultural diversity, and chapter 9 examines issues relating to professionalism and the acquisition of intercultural skills. Chapter 10 looks at different interpretations of the concepts of 'public' and 'private', and chapters 11, 12, and 13 describe two innovative approaches to assessment--the introduction of group training and assessment, and joint assessment visits with a black foster parent co-worker. Chapter 14 explores the study's findings within the broader context of sociopolitical change. Contains a bibliography of over 400 items. (TJQ)

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